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# LETTER

Written by

Dr. HOLDEN

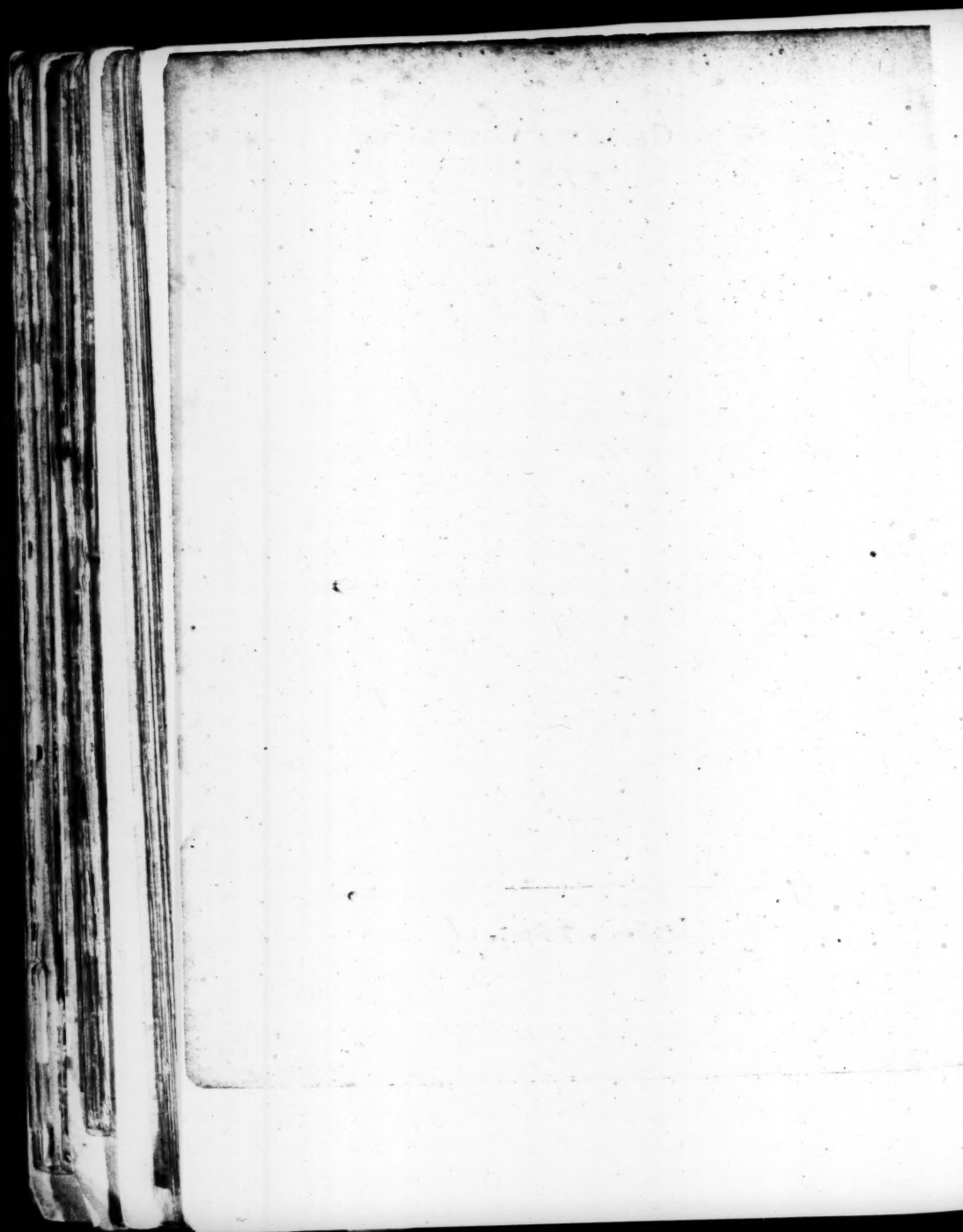
TO

Mr. GRAUNT,

Concerning Mr. White's Treatise De Medico  
Animarum Statu.



Printed at Paris 1661





*A Letter written by Dr. HOLDEN,  
to Mr. GRAUNT, &c.*

SIR,

Or your private satisfaction I am willing to let you know my opinion concerning the book and controverſie you mention; though otherwiſe I conceive it is to little purpoſe. Beſides that, my long abſence from *England* hath made me almoſt a ſtranger to all particulars of your proceedings there. I neither know the *Monck* nor the *Frier* you ſay have written againſt that book of Mr. *white's*, *De medio Animarum Statu*, nor have I ſeen what they have publiſhed. And therefore I ſhall not, at leaſt wittingly, intimate any thing in oppoſition either to their perſons, or writings. As for Mr.

*White*, he is my antient friend, and shall be ever so, as long as I conceive him to be a faithfull servant to *Christ Jesus, and his Church*. Which I hope and wish as to my self, may be as long as God shall give him Life. Yet this I must needs say, that I much dislike two things in his manner of writing.

First, that he broacheth too too many exotick and uncouth opinions in all the matters he writes upon.

Secondly, ( which is worse ) he sets them down in such unusual, untoward, crabbed, and bitter language, that his very stile and manner of speech is displeasing, yea offensive to the Reader, though even his friend. Whereby his doctrine is so far from taking that effect, which I suppose he would have it, that is, to be admitted and received, at least amongst the more learned sort of men; that contrarywise it is thrown by and neglected, if not quite blasted and condemned at the first sight. Yet I find that amongst our curious French wits ( who will see all things ) it gets him the reputation of a great Geny, and of a very learned man. What needed, I pray, that severe and almost unseemly expression, *that it were a less crime to violate a sacred Virgin upon an Altar, than to settle amongst us the belief of the Popes Infallibility?* Why so rigorously to brand the doctrine of *opus operatum*, as some Divines do explicate it, with the censure of *pagan superstition, hypocritical witchcraft, and worse by no better refutation than the fire?* And from these and the like expressions he is not to be dissuaded by any friend whomsoever. I confesse I am not of opinion, no more than he, that there is any personal in-

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rability in the Pope all alone. And this hath been the antient tenet of our Facultie, which many of us, and no few *Regulars*, even *Jesuits*, in this Town do still maintain. However, by reason so many learned and virtuous men do hold the contrary, we ought, in my judgment, to testifie our dislike of their opinion with respect and civility, and prove our own with the strongest arguments we can. Nor do I approve of the explication which some *Divines* do give of *opus operatum*, that is, that the Sacraments do conferre grace and work upon men, as if they were stocks or stones, independently of their soules co-operations, and without any relation to their connatural and free disposition thereunto. Yet would I not reprove their sentiments as *Paganism* and *wichcraft*. How harsh is that language, *That it could not have happened better to the damned, but God and nature must have been worse?* How unheard-of in the Church, *That those places in the Creed, and Scripture, of our Saviour his being conceived of the Holy Ghost, are to be understood of God the Father?* These and divers like expressions we find in Mr. *White* his works, though fewer of this kind in the book you speak of, than in several others. But to the point.

I am sorry with all my heart that Catholick Priests and Religious men should write one against an other in matters of Religion, and that in a vulgar tongue and in a Protestant Countrey, They being sent thither to undeceive, and sweetly to instill the true and infallible principles of our Catholick Faith into the hearts and minds of those that erre as lost sheep out of Christs fold; sure their publick and internal jarres

amongst themselves, especially in matters of Religion, must needs dis-edifie. Besides, their conflicts and debates of this nature, will still be mixed with some words of vinegar, and gall, which will bespot the lovely face of Charity. And indeed such is the forwardnesse of many of our Divines in this age, particularly of the weaker sort, that if any private man do but conceive his opinion doth follow out of some text of Scripture, or other Article of Faith; or to be contained in the definition of some Council or Pope, he dareth presently make himself the mouth of the Church, and call his Adversary an Heretick, or at least his Opinion an Heresie.

This boldnesse hath ever extreemly disliked me, and I cannot but esteem it a huge indiscretion and great temerity: for such an one builds the immediate certainty of his judgment or belief upon his own private discourse and drawn consequence out of a true premisis (though accompanied perhaps with a great number of our disputative Divines, or which is worse, with the credulous opinion of the popular multitude) which certainly cannot be a sufficient ground to superstruct upon it such an infallible assent as is requisite to our Christian and Catholick Faith. In fine Sir, all controversies amongst Catholicks touching the Doctrine or Discipline of the Church, do properly belong to the Tribunals of our spiritual Governours, there to be proposed and moderately discussed; But not to be agitated in print by private men, banding, and backing one against another, and publicly exposing their dissentions to the lay people, before they  
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be decided. I was truly grieved to see Mr. *Pughe* his small book, which you sent me long ago. And sure I was not glad to see Mr. *White's Monumetham Excantatus*, in answer unto it. For as I conceive such things ought never to be written, so ought they never to be answered, And though Mr. *Pughe* used me very unkindly, not to say worse, yet had others been of my opinion, he should never have heard more of it. But I saw an other answer to him of late, which seriously I almost blushed to read, both for his and the Authors sake.

Now Sir, to your question.

First, I must tell you that in this point of Purgatory, all Catholicks, even the Greekes, do agree in what we differ from the Protestants, As that we all hold there is a state of Soules departed out of this life, which we call Purgatory.

Secondly, That Soules in Purgatory do receive relief and comfort by the prayers and good deeds of the living. As by the sacrifice of the Mass, almes-deeds and the like. And this tenet is such an Article of our Catholick Faith, as that whosoever should openly and willfully deny it, would be immediately excommunicated by his Bishop for an heretick, and declamed as such by the whole Church, *Nemine contradicente*. For there is no point of our Catholick Faith more ancient, more authentical, and more universally testified, as delivered by tradition from the Apostles, than this. In witnesse whereof I cannot forbear to cite that excellent passage of *Tertull. de cor. mil. c. 3. Oblationes pro defunctis facimus, &c.* (where he addeth several Catholick practices which the Protestants disallow)

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*harum & ejusmodi aliarum disciplinarum si legem postu-  
les, scripturarum nullam invenies. Traditio tibi prae-  
tendetur auctrix, consuetudo confirmatrix, & fides conser-  
vatrix.*

But our Divines differ amongst themselves.

First, about the manner of the paines, that is, how the Soules in Purgatory are punished.

Secondly, about the time of their delivery out of this state of punishment. And I never yet met with any learned man, who did not acknowledge both these points to be doubtfully disputed in our schools. As also, that neither Scriptures, Councils, Popes, or Fathers had ever so determined any thing herein, that it hath been universally received by the Church for an Article of Faith. Clear it is, that Antiquity, especially of the primitive Church, makes little mention of these two points, I mean taking them exactly in the rigorous property of the words. Fire is spoken of upon several occasions, both in relation to Hell, and Purgatory; But that it is meant of a true, material, and real fire, either in Hell, or Purgatory, properly speaking, which tormenteth spirits, and Soules de- vested of their bodyes, who can tell us with that in- erability, which is requisite to an Article of Faith. Truly this seemeth to me to be much more besitting the apprehension of the vulgar, who conceive spirits by the notions they have of sensible things, than the judgement of learned men, who I suppose, know somewhat more than the ordinary people of the nature of a spirit. Yet certainly it was ever requisite that the Church should use the language of the Scrip-  
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ture, in expressing the torments both of Hell and Purgatory. But to alleage the metaphorical, or allegorical phrases of the Scripture ( as *weeping and gnashing of teeth*, and the like ) in proof of a material Fire, is, in my judgement, very unworthy of a Divine.

Wherein therefore the nature of these pains doth consist; whence and how the intrinsecal sufferings of Souls departed out of this life do flow; whether any grosse, material and quantitive Agent can work upon separated souls being pure Spirits; I am confident there is nothing so infallibly resolved upon these points, and so be universally received by the Church, as that either side ought to be acknowledged for an Article of our Catholick faith. I will not say but that a truly-learned Divine, profoundly grounded and knowing in the Principles of natural Philosophy, may demonstrate the truth of these questions. And I am perswaded it is no harder to know their true and certain resolution, than to evidence by natural reason, the pure spirituality and immortality of the Soul of man. But this I will not meddle with, as being unnecessary to the satisfying of your demand: However I dare assure you, that as a *Roman* Catholick, you are not obliged to believe any thing in these points, as being determined, and universally received by the Church, for an Article of our Faith.

The second point, which is of the time when souls are delivered out of Purgatory, seemeth to be of more difficulty, and that for divers reasons. Yet to prevent your facility of believing common and vulgar



teners to be Articles of Faith, I must desire you to call to mind the main principle and basis of all Christian Faith, which must stand immoveable, like a Rock; that is, that we are not obliged to believe any thing as an Article of our Catholick Faith, but what Christ Jesus and his Apostles have revealed to the Church, and which hath been universally delivered from hand to hand, and taught by Father to Sonne as a Christian Truth, from their times until this day. Now, Sir, I am confident that no Divine will ever say, that any determinate time of the delivery of Souls out of Purgatory, is a truth thus revealed; and thus taught by universal tradition, as an Article of our Catholick Faith, according to that of Origen, l. 8. in Epist. ad Rom. c. 11. *versus finem. Verum hæc ipsa Purgatio quæ per pœnam ignis adhibetur, quantis temporibus, quantivisve sæculis de peccatoribus exigit cruciatus, solus scire potest, cui Pater omne iudicium tradidit.*

And consequently it followeth most evidently (what proofs soever be brought on either side) that it is no Article of Faith, nor you therefore obliged to give any internal assent thereunto, as being of that nature.

You will say (I suppose) that although no determinate time of particular Souls being delivered out of Purgatory, be taught or acknowledged by the Church; yet that some souls are delivered before the day of Judgement, that you ever conceived to be a point of our belief: Which, whether it be absolutely and formally of the nature of an Article of Faith, as here expressed and declared, that perhaps you

will say, you know not? However you conceive it at least to have such certainty from uncontradicted humane Authority, as that it were a great rashness for any private man to deny it. I confesse, what you say seems to be true; and therefore I will clear it unto you the best I can, and that in few words; and bring the reasons, which carry divers men to condemn of temerity the maintainers of the negative part, unto three heads.

The first shall be the *Bull of Benedictus the 11* (commonly called the 12.) and the *Decree of the Council of Florence, under Eugenius the 4.* The second head shall be *divers concessions of Popes, especially of later times.* The third shall be *some Histories, whereunto we will add the authority of divers antient Fathers, the common opinion of our modern Divines, and the more common belief and practice of the vulgar;* All which seem to condemn whomsoever shall maintain that no soul is or can be delivered out of Purgatory, before the day of Doom.

As to the *Bull of Benedictus*, when I went to read it over, upon the occasion of your asking my opinion in this point (for I have seen nothing of what hath been written amongst you upon this subject) at the first sight it seemed very favourable, and as it were a full definition of the affirmative part. But looking farther into the *Histories*, and reflecting more seriously upon the aim and intention of the *Bull*, I found there was nothing determined concerning this point. The *Bul* told me, that the matter in question in *Pope John 22. his time amongst Doctors of Divinity, was, concerning the vi-*



tion of the Divine essence by the Souls of the just, after their death, in which there was nothing to be purged; or if there were, that it was now totally purged; whether, I say, these souls did see the Divine Essence before the general judgement, this I see, was then a question in the Church, wherein the Doctors differed amongst themselves, saith the Bull; And consequently, nor then was it, nor can it ever be an Article of our Catholick faith, because not *Catholick*, according to the ground above-said.

Secondly, I see that Pope John 22, had prepared himself to have this question discussed in his presence; and, as the most part of Historians say, was resolved to define the negative part, had he not been prevented by death.

Thirdly, I find that this point or question of the beatifical Vision, as above proposed and expressed, is fully and clearly defined and determined. Now, whereas in this decree, there be some words and passages, which indeed do suppose, that some souls are perfectly purged after death, before the day of judgement, and consequently see God beatifically before that time, according to the resolution of this Decree; Yet in effect, those words and passages do not belong to the substance of the Definition, which was only to determine the question then in dispute, and thereby to condemn the contrary error, as both the occasion, and the intention of the Bull do clearly shew. The reason of this is evident; for there was no question here, whether some souls in Purgatory, were perfectly purged before the general judgement or no: but only

only whether the souls of the Just, and such as were perfectly purged (when or wheresoever it be ) be not presently and immediately admitted to the sight and beatifical Vision of the Divine Essence. Now all Divines know, that what is contained in a *Bull* or Decree, not directly and formally belonging to the substance of the question, or point defined, is not to be allag'd as part of the definition; much lesse to be understood as a decision of a point not intended nor aimed at. Nay, a Council or Pope may not only suppose an untruth in their Decree, but even give a reason of their definition, which may be an error. As in the 7 general Council ( 2 of *Nice* ) in the discussion of the question, whether Angels might be painted? The Fathers said, *De Angelis & ipsa Catholica Ecclesia sic sentit, eos esse quidem intelligentes sed non omnino corporis expertes & invisibiles*; and therefore concluded that they might be painted. If this *Bull* had said, *ipsa Catholica Ecclesia sic sentit*, that some souls are delivered out of Purgatory before the day of judgement, and therefore that some souls who have sinned after Baptism, and not fully purged while they were in their bodies, do see God, and enjoy the beatifical Vision of his Divine Essence before the general judgement; if I say, this had been the tenor of the *Bull*, it would have been of much greater force for the affirmative part, than now it is. And yet in this very case, it had not defined the question, nor assured us of the truth of the affirmative position, as you see by the example in the 7 General Council; and the like I could bring of several others, if it were needful.

We may therefore hence conclude two things most evidently. 1. That the Pope in this *Bull* did believe and suppose, that some souls were fully purified in Purgatory before the general judgement.

2. That he neither defined this point, nor intended to do it; which if he had, though I do not believe there is any personal infallibility in the Pope alone, yet I would say with our Chancellour *Gerson*, that his Definition would oblige us to silence, though not to an internal assent.

As for the Council of *Florence*, I conceive it to be of much lesse force in this point, than *Benedictus* his *Bull*: for you must first note, that this question was only proposed in the beginning of the Assembly at *Ferrara*, before any session was held, as a preambulatory subject of discourse, to entertain the *Latine and Greek Fathers*, untill they came to sit upon the main questions for which they were assembled.

2. The *Latin and Greek Fathers* proposed their opinions by turns, of the nature of Purgatory, or what Purgatory is: As also whether the souls of the just, either departed; without sin, or perfectly purged, do see God, and enjoy the *Beatifical Vision*.

3. We find some variety, both in the relation of their disputes, and in the words wherein they are said to have agreed in this point; for all the *Latine* Editions of *Crabbe*, *Surius*, *Binius*, *Justinianus*, have different words from those of the *Greek* Editions, though neither of them do determine, nor in effect do touch your present controversie.

And if we should allow of *D<sup>r</sup> Creighton* (that great *Grecian*)

*Grecian*) his late Edition (which I have not had occasion to compare with the Manuscript Original in the Kings Library, from whence his Copy was stolen) we sh<sup>d</sup> not believe that the *Latins* and *Grecians* did agree at all in their disputation, when they did discuss this point. And the whole relation of the History of the Council, as he hath put it forth, would no little weaken the force of *Eugenius* his Decree or Letter of Union, if it were true.

But however the *Latine* Editions say, *Tandem post multa &c. omnes in eam sententiam verunt; justorum ac sanctorum animas perfecta frui felicitate; perfectiori tamen cum suis corporibus, cum resurrexerint fruituras, cum etiam ut sol &c.* The *Greek* Editions say, *Declaratum fuit demum, Sanctos consecutos & non consecutos esse beatitudinem; hoc est, animas quidem, ut animas, ad perfectam pervenisse beatitudinem: in resurrectione tamen perfectionem esse consecuturas cum propriis corporibus, quando ut sol &c.* And after this dispute and agreement, even before any Session, not one word more of this point in all the 24. or (as the *Greeks* count them) 25 Sessions of the Council.

At the end of the Council *Eugenius* made *Litere unionis*, which in some *Greek* Editions is entituled, *Definitio Concilii Florentini*, and is signed by the Fathers of the Council, some few excepted. Concerning which subscription more might be said than is fit for this place.

The terms of the Definition, if seriously considered, will appear to have decided nothing at all in relation to your question; for they say only, *Illorum verò*

*anim-*

*animas qui post baptismum susceptum, nullam omnino peccati maculam incurrerunt ; illas etiam quæ post contractam peccati maculam, vel in suis corporibus, vel eisdem exuta corporibus ( ut superius dictum est ) sunt Purgate, in Cælum mox recipi, & intueri clarè Deum ipsum &c.* Which Mr. White, as I remember, doth not deny in his Book *De medio animarum statu* ; for your question is only, as I take it, whether some soules be perfectly purged in Purgatory, and consequently delivered thence before the day of judgement ; which the Council doth not define at all. It saith only that *souls purged* (when ever or where ever it be) *are presently received into Heaven*, which is quite another thing. For suppose that none were purged after they were devested of their bodies, untill the general judgement, yet still would the Definition remain good. But if so, you might reply, that the Council would then suppose an untruth, that is, a thing that never was, nor ever will be, being it doth suppose that some soules devested of their bodies, are purged and immediately received into Heaven, before the day of judgement.

This I acknowledge, as I did of *Benedictus* his Bull : For truly I conceive that the *Latine* Fathers were of opinion, and did suppose, when determination was made, that some soules were fully purified in Purgatory, and went to Heaven before the day of Judgement. And therefore what probability, or rather what assurance their authority may give to that opinion, I should certainly allow it, but never to be an Article of faith, which is the only thing I stand upon.

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As for the Concessions of Popes, in relation to the deliverie of souls out of Purgatory, I confess I have seen very ample ones, given under the title of Indulgences, to privileg'd Altars, to Scapulars, Guerdles, Medals, Sodalities, Confraternities, and the like : whereunto, ( omitting to speak of their abuses, ) I will only tell you two things ; First, that the most I ever heard any learned and unbyassed man say in their favour, was, *Valeant quantum valere possunt*, which is as much as to say, although we be altogether uncertain what effect such Indulgences may have in relation to the deliverie of souls out of Purgatory, yet let us make the best use of them that we can. Secondly, it is the universal opinion of all Divines, that our prayers, alms, and other good deeds whatsoever, done for the deliverie of souls out of Purgatory, joyned with never so many Indulgences, have no other effect in relation thereunto, than what may be obtained, *per modum suffragii*, that is to say, in as much as our prayers may be more or less efficacious in the sight of Almighty God. Not that the Indulgences of themselves, or by any proper power of their own, distinct from our prayers, do procure the delivery of any soul out of Purgatory, but only that we may hope that God, vouchsafing to hear our prayers, may out of his infinite goodness, grant what relief or comfort his heavenly wisdom shall think fit, to such poor souls as lye there in torment. Now what effect in particular it doth please God out of his mercy to give to any of our prayers, no man upon Earth can certainly know without a revelation. Whether therefore any soul in particular be delivered out of Purgatory before the general judgment, by



virtue of our prayers, joyned with never so many Indulgences, is altogether uncertain; and that some souls do remain in Purgatory, even untill the day of judgment, is very certain in my opinion, as clearly appears by the practice of the Church: For hence it is, that we daily found and say Masses for the same soul to the Worlds end; as our University doth, and hath yearly said Masse these four hundred years in the *Sorbon* for *Peter Lombard* his soul, founder of the house.

Hence it is also that we reiterate our Christian sacrifice for the same souls at privileg'd Altars, notwithstanding all the Indulgences that the Pope can give us, though they bear that one Mass would serve the turn. All which clearly sheweth, we have no certainty of the time of the delivery of any particular soul out of Purgatory.

As for the third point, I confesse there be divers historical revelations of the delivery of souls out of Purgatory, both so antient, and so authentical, as that I cannot doubt but that the affirmative part hath been the opinion of the Church: not that I conceive those histories to be alwaies certainly true, much less that we are oblig'd to believe them; but that having never been contradicted by any of the antient Fathers, or other considerable Authors, in their severall times respectively, Methinks it is an evident sign, that such was ever the belief of the Church; and that those revelations were looked upon as consonant, or at least not opposite, to any Apostolical tradition, nor indeed, to any other opinion then on foot; which though it hath not sufficient certainty to be an Article of Faith, yet ought not the contrary to be publickly averred without great precaution and submission. For



For the Fathers I confels, if we stand upon their authority, and of other antient Writers, (which in matters of Religion is a main foundation ) I am fully of opinion, that the affirmative part is more probable, more secure, and more conform to the voice of the Church in all Ages; for although their words and passages upon this subject be but seldom so precisely, and so exactly decisive, as that they may not admit an explication in M<sup>r</sup>. *white's* favour; yet generally their language is of that nature, as that it doth testify they believed souls were purified by their penal abode in Purgatory. I do not think any one Author can be alleged antient or modern, who positively, and clearly denyeth the delivery of souls out of Purgatory before the general judgment. Many of the Fathers pray for the lessening of the pains of souls in Purgatory: Others, that their pains may be accomplished before the Resurrection: Others, that their Pains in Purgatory may make them fit for their Cœlestial bodies at the day of Judgment: Others, that their *macule leviores*, or small sins, may be there (that is in Purgatory) forgiven them: Others call their pains, *Expiantes*, that is, which purifie: Others pray for their solace and quiet: Others for the remission of their sins: Others for their delivery thence: Others, in fine, that by their pains they may be found perfectly purged and purified when they shall come to be judged; which language doth surely testify what was their belief. I will point you out two or three passages in particular, of the most antient Fathers, which I conceive to be invincible; *Tertul. de monogam. c. 10. pro anima ejus orat* ( a widow for her husbands soul ) & *refrigerium interim adpostu-*

lat ei, & in resurrectione consortium, take notice of the word *Interim*; Gregor. Nyffe. more plainly, *l. de anima & resurrect.* speaking of the pains of souls in Purgatory, *sed pro modo ac quantitate materiae, vel longiore, vel breviori temporis spatio, illa flamma dolorifica, quamdiu fuerit id, quod eam alat, accenditur. Cui igitur magnum inheret onus materiae, in eo necesse est magnam & diutius durantem esse flammam, quae materiam eam consumat. In eo vero cui minori spatio temporis, &c.* Eucherius Lugdun. *an. 450. hom. 3. de Epiphania*, speaking of Purgatory, saith, *quanta fuerit peccati materia, tanta erit pertransseunti mora*. These, and many such like passages do fully convince that the affirmative part was their opinion and belief. For the common opinion of our modern Divines, I confess that an argument drawn only from their authorities doth not convince me at all, on which side soever it stand; much less doth any whit move me the female belief and practice of the vulgar, in these kind of devotions, especially when they seem to be novelties: for our Divines dispute all things problematically, which are not universally believed by the Catholick Church, as Articles of our Faith, but avouch nothing for certain, in so much that I am sometimes even tired and wearied out with the *chicanno de L'escole*, as we call it here; yet I am content to let them profess and enjoy their sceptical probabilities, so they will let me possess and use my liberty. For the vulgar, they are so generally blinded in their belief and practice of such particular and slight devotions, especially when they fall into the hands of weak or interested leaders, that they who are their natural Superiors and Governours by Christ his institution, are generally  
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blamed for suffering it, though sometimes they cannot mend it. For my part, I can let them alone unless they be such as are guided by my advice and counsel, and then I do what I can to keep them out of error.

I know very well, Sir, that if we look into the nature of a separated soul, that is, of a pure spirit, untied and freed from all matter, and thence find it to be incapable of any successive intrinsecal alteration, and above all possible comparison to any space of time or place; and consequently, that it must of necessity possess all that it is capable of at once, and in the first and self-same moment of its being such (which seemeth to be the very nature and essence of a spirit:) We shall hardly find any means how to deliver a soul separated from its body out of its first state after its separation, and translate it into another condition; Or in effect how we should truly conceive it capable of any change at all, especially by the activity of a material Agent, untill its reunion with its body again. Nor shall we know how a blessed spirit can as much as reiterate any act, either of knowledge or love, in all its eternity; its whole state being but one only act, and that act perhaps not distinguished from its very essence and nature; as if a man born blind, should in a moment come to see clearly the most pleasing object that can be imagined, and both that *object*, and the *medium* through which it were seen, immutable; such a man would ever stand gazing upon that object, and would but make one act of seeing, or vision, for as long as we would suppose his faculty or power of seeing to be insatigable, and he not diverted by any inter-

nal disposition in himself, or external cause ; such we may conceive to be the life of a spirit, whether in bliss, or woe ; that is, one eternal and immutable act of adhesion unto, and possessing of that object, which it doth violently grasp and embrace in the first moment of its being a pure spirit.

Yet am I not so certain of the truth of this discourse, but that there may be, for any thing I know, such a liberty, mutability, or flexibility in the will of a separated soul, it being not yet *in termino*, ( as St. *Tho.* of *Aquin* saith, l. 4. *contra gent. c. 91.* ) that is, in the last period and state of its immortal abode, as that it may be capable of a spiritual and momentanean alteration, (such as it must have at the general Judgment, ) without destroying its nature ; and this by some special grace and mercy of God his goodness and omnipotency ; which in what particular manner, and by what particular means this may, or may not be wrought, I doubt whether any mortal man can clearly demonstrate.

What shall we say of the *Angels*, those bodyless spirits, who in the moment before their standing or falling, had such flexibilitie, or rather free liberty in their wills, as that some, through Gods grace, imbraced their everlasting happiness ; others, through their owne fault, their eternal damnation ? why may there not be such a mutable disposition, that is, capable of mutation in a separated soul ; especially it being not yet *in termino*, and the question in relation to God's omnipotency ? What shall we say of the blessed Patriarchs, of whose corporal resurrection we have no testimony from any Author, and yet we are certain their souls were

were translated into eternal blisse at Christ his resurrection? Shall we say that the intervall (how long so ever it be) of a Soules entring into Purgatory untill the general judgement, shall be altogether unprofitable unto it? Why hath the state of Soules (even as considered before the day of judgement) been alwayes called by the Church, *Purgatory*, if their pains there be only afflictive, and no way purgative? For if any way purgative, Mr. *White's* opinion falleth to the ground. Nay, can there be any pain in a soul, not yet *in termino*, purely dolorous, & no way absterfivewhy do all our antient Liturgies, all our publick prayers of the Church for the dead, the general language of all the antient and modern authors, demand *refrigerium* for the soules in Purgatory, if they be totally incapable of any refreshment as long as they are there? For Mr. *White* cannot say that they receive any new comfort, of any kind, by our prayers, untill the general judgement; no, though even they know that by our prayers the time of their abode there is to be shortned; for nothing can happen to them *de novo*, in his opinion, untill then. Why hath the Church ever prayed for this and that soul in particular, if no other solace or relief than what is common to them all, can be applyed to any singular and individual soul? In fine, Mr. *White* must not acknowledge the poor soules in Purgatory, as long as they are there, that is, untill the day of judgement, are capable of refreshment, of any expiation, of any remission, of any difference of time (what difference so ever there be in their sinnes) nor of any adventitious *more* or *lesse* of any kind. All which is quite contrary to universal language of the whole Church in all Ages.

I confesse, that out of pure natural reason I know not how to satisfie my self, granting any mutability in a separated soul: Yet I had rather acknowledge my own ignorance, than swerve and dissent from the common language, belief, and practice of the Church, and stand alone in opposition thereto. However, I hope what I have said is sufficient to satisfie your doubt, being I dare assure you once more, that there is nothing so determined, and so universally received by the Church, concerning these two points; of the manner how souls are punished and purified in Purgatory; and of the time of their delivery thence, that ought to make you fear either side it's being an Article of our Catholick Faith. Which is all I need say for the present, my employments not affording me either time or leisure to write more fully my mind, upon such nice and hard questions. If in any thing else you please to command me, I hope I need not tell it you, for you know I am

Paris 15 March,  
1661.

Your most humble and  
truly affectionate ser-  
vant

H. HOLDEN.

FINIS.



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